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TITLE: Establish A Catch & Release Hook & Line Lake Sturgeon Fishing Season

CONCERN: The hook and line "Emergency Lake Sturgeon Rule" implemented in 2007, greatly reduced Wisconsin's Sturgeon fishing season from 6-8 weeks to 3-4 weeks, in order to prevent the overharvesting of mature Sturgeon.

Although the management goals and objectives for size and numbers of Sturgeon harvested are being achieved in some areas, the opportunity to fish for Sturgeon has not been favorable to Anglers.

PRESENT: Each year in Wisconsin, the hook and line Lake Sturgeon Season is from the first Saturday in September through September 30th. This years 2013 Sturgeon harvest open season would span only 24 days. The season is closed for 341 days.

~~A growing majority of Sturgeon Anglers have expressed their favor of having the Sturgeon Fishing Season restored to the original length (pre 2007) in each of the Sturgeon areas and at minimum be offered as a catch and release season.~~

PROPOSAL: By allowing the opportunity to fish and not harvest (catch & release) Sturgeon, after the September 30th season closure, throughout October, harvest rates would be unaffected while Anglers would still be able to participate in a favorite past-time, while not interfering with fish reproduction, since spawning occurs in the spring.

~~Sturgeons are resilient fish and have the ability to live 50+ years. They have withstood the test of time. Sturgeons are ultimate Catch & Release fish due to their ability to withstand angling stress and time out of the water.~~

Be it resolved, that the Conservation Congress at its annual meeting held in Waukesha County on April 8, 2013 recommends that the Congress work with the Department to take action, by introducing a rule change to **Establish A Catch & Release Hook & Line Lake Sturgeon Fishing Season.**



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